

VZCZCXRO3919

PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBC RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDE RUEHDF RUEHDIR RUEHIK

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DE RUEHAA #1295 2731349

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 291349Z SEP 08

FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1633

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4347

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2159

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2024

RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 2595

RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUEAAIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 001295

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN AND INR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: MARR MOPS PINR PREL SNAR SOCI TX

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: STATE COUNTER-NARCOTICS DIRECTOR

ISLAMOV REQUESTS DEA TRAINING

¶1. (SBU) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for Internet distribution.

¶2. (SBU) DEA Special Agent William Gustafson, one of three officers comprising DEA's Tajikistan Country Office, visited Ashgabat September 5-9 to meet with representatives of Turkmenistan's new State Counter Narcotics Service (SCNS) and discussed plans for collaboration between the two agencies. His visit coincided with that of representatives of CENTCOM's Counter Narcotics office, who also attended the SCNS meeting.

INTEREST IN TRAINING

¶3. (SBU) SCNS director Colonel Murad Islamov told Gustafson that he is eager to invite members of DEA's international training team to Turkmenistan to conduct seminars for SCNS officers. He also agreed to allow some of their officers to undergo further training at DEA's headquarters in Quantico, VA, where they could observe DEA Enforcement groups performing their duties. Islamov has also requested specialized training for SCNS chemists.

SCNS STRUCTURE

¶4. (SBU) Director Islamov told SA Gustafson that SCNS is to be comprised of separate operational and investigative officers with distinct functions, and when fully staffed, the agency will have about 1000 personnel. (The agency is reportedly 50% staffed at present). He described the primary mission of the SCNS as combating narcotics trafficking in Turkmenistan, but also drug demand reduction, training and drug testing. He said that the agency, comprised of provincial, city and regional branches, will be managed by a national headquarters, but did not provide details about the number of personnel at each level or which level would carry out narcotics investigations. SCNS personnel reportedly would conduct searches at all of Turkmenistan's major border crossing points.

¶5. (SBU) SA Gustafson visited the border crossing with Uzbekistan at Farap, which will be equipped when completed with highly advanced scanning and detection capabilities.

**¶6. (SBU) COMMENT:** U.S.-Turkmenistan counter-narcotics cooperation has been an area of particular success in the bilateral relationship. We fully support DEA's efforts to enhance their collaboration with the Turkmen and look forward to welcoming two of their Dushanbe staff in Ashgabat for separate TDY missions in the very near future. END COMMENT.

CURRAN